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Grand Canyon News Release

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Rangers at Grand Canyon National Park Initiate Search for Overdue Backpackers

Grand Canyon, Ariz. – At approximately 7:20 p.m. on Tuesday, July 21, the Grand Canyon Regional Communications Center received a report that at least one young man, and possibly as many as three, were overdue from a backpacking trip at Grand Canyon National Park.

The young men are reported to have left on a trip to the Deer Creek/Thunder River area on Saturday after reading about the trip in a magazine. According to the reporting party, the father of one of the young men, his son had stated that he would be back on Monday, but did not return. Further investigation revealed that there were as many as four young men in the hiking party. All are in their early 20s, and all are believed to be students at Northern Arizona University. It was also determined that this group did not have a backcountry permit.

Today at approximately 7:30 a.m., rangers found the group's car parked at the Bill Hall Trailhead which is located about half way between the North Rim developed area and Tuweep. A containment area was established at the exit points the young men might have used in the area, and an initial ground search was conducted at the Indian Hollow and Bill Hall Trailheads. A helicopter with three spotters also conducted an initial aerial search of the Tapeats and Deer Creek drainages as well as all trails in the area, but did not locate the young men. Additionally, all groups currently on the river were notified about the search and groups who have disembarked, but were on the river between Saturday and Tuesday, are being contacted to determine if the young men were seen in the vicinity of the river. Thus far, no one contacted on the trail or on the river has reported seeing the missing hikers.

No further details are available at this time. Additional details will be provided as they become available

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